forwarded to the US Government. A revised request, in conformity with the requirements of the Extradition Treaty with USA in the final stages of preparation.

Wildlife Semen Bank

1098. DR. KARAN SINGH:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a need to open a wildlife semen bank, to store semen and egg samples of all the endangered species of animals in the country;

(b) if so, what action has been taken by Government in this direction;

(c) if not, whether it is worried that certain species would come on the endangered list or become extint; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A "Laboratory for Conservation of Endangered Species (LACONES)" is being established at Hyderabad under the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) for undertaking research on biotechnological interventions for conservation of wildlife. Cryopreservation of sperm and ova of endangered species is one of the components of the proposed research programme.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Haze over India

1099. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI R.P. GOENKA:
SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:
SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report has pointed out that a thick brown haze forms over India

and much of Asia, containing ash, acids, aerosols and other particles, which could have profound effect on human health, crop-yield and the rain pattern;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and how far it would pollute air in our land;

(c) the details of the major observations/conclusions contained in the report and the result of any further investigations made into these conclusions; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to guard against the harmful effects on our system?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (d) An international collaborative study "Indian Ocean Research Experiment (INDOEX)" has indicated haze over the Indian Ocean. The haze is not a permanent feature of the atmosphere over the Asian region and the surrounding seas. It occurs only during January—March, the season in which INDOEX observations were made in 1999. Conclusive data are not available to co-relate the impact of haze on human health as well as the monsoon and/or agriculture of our country. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has, this year, brought out a report entitled "The Asian Brown Cloud: Climate and other Environmental Impacts" based on INDOEX. The press release of the UNEP launching the said report paints an alarming picture of the impacts of this haze on both regional and global scales. However, most of the concerns expressed therein are not well substantiated by reliable modeling studies or experimental observations. The existing legal and policy framework, supported by several initiatives to protect and improve the environment, addresses the concerns of air pollution in the country.

Eco-friendly and Bio-degradable Plastic

†1100. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any special action plan for a new protocol to promote eco-friendly and bio-degradable plastic;

(b) if so the details thereof; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to prevent pollution spread by the plastic and by when the eco-friendly and biodegradable plastic would be made available in the Indian market?

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.